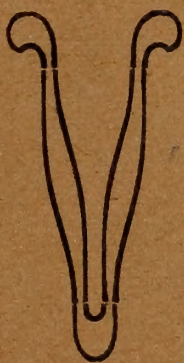


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How Canada Can Best Serve Britain
and Her Allies in the Present
War, and at the Same Time
Make Canada Rich

[Noble, John]



How Canada Can Best Serve Britain and Her Allies in the Present War, and at the Same Time Make Canada Rich

To the M.P.'s and M.P.P.'s of Canada:

Honorable Gentlemen: I think it is the duty of every legislator to try to evolve some scheme that will cause each farm in Canada to produce twice as much in 1915 as it ever produced in any previous year.

This can only be done by getting men, women and children to live on the farm.

Work, pay and pleasure are the magnets that draw. We must have these three things on the farm; if we do not, the men, women and children will not go there, or if they do, they won't stay.

In this pamphlet I have endeavored, in my humble way, to show why people have left the farm, and how to get them back again. Read it.

We hear a great deal just now about unemployment, high cost of living, scarcity of food in Europe, and the pressing need that our farmers should double, or treble their outputs next year.

I see one suggestion that the Federal Government should give \$50,000,000 for the breaking in of new land.

I think we have plenty of land under cultivation now for the population that we have to work it; perhaps too much. What we need is more intense farming; thus giving more employment to a greater number of persons, increasing our total output, improving our farms, and incidentally allowing our farmers to make more profit with less personal toil.

Take a run out of Toronto in any direction, and anyone that knows anything whatever about farming, can see at a glance that farms, especially those near to the city, are not producing much more than 50% of what they could be made to profitably produce. And you will also note much waste; loss, because work is not done properly and at the proper time.

You ask the farmer for an explanation, and probably his first statement will be that he cannot get labor at a wage that

would leave any margin of profit for himself. You look round and see a comfortable dwelling for the farmer, also housing for his animals, but where is the housing for his help? There is none. That means that the hired man must be a single man and form part of the family, which is not always desirable. Then when the summer's work is over, the said hired man drifts into the city and is lost sight of.

Then the farmer often sells off most of his grain and his hay and only keeps as much stock as he can attend to without hired help.

This is a bad policy; it not only robs the farmer of a nice profit on fattening stock, but, worse than that, it robs the farm of fertilizer for the following year.

Every farmer should give a house and garden without rent, and also the keep of a cow, to his hired man. Then the wage would be less and the hired man could be employed all the year round.

This man's family, as they grew up, would have a taste for farming, and would not be likely to gravitate to the cities. This would aid the "back to the land" movement.

I have another fault to find with the farmer. When he sells his stuff and meets his obligations, he puts the overplus into the bank at 3% no matter how much need there be that it should be spent on the farm.

Nearly every farmer has a nice fat little bank account. And there it remains; nothing will make him take it out except a wedding, or a funeral, or for the purchase of a neighboring farm; a farmer has no dread of becoming land poor.

Thus the farmer shows that he either lacks confidence in his farm, or in his own ability to run it.

Does a business man who has three or four thousand dollars profit at the end of a year, put it in the bank and draw 3% for it? No, he puts it all back into the business and perhaps borrows some of the farmer's 3% money from the bank at 7% or 8% and risks it all; he has confidence in himself and in his business; the farmer hasn't.

Now, I have a scheme on. We have a large number of real estate men at present sitting in their offices holding down a chair and listening at the phone for an enquiry that does not come, or if it does it's from the bank to know when they are going to pay that draft. I want these men to form up a large joint stock company for us, for the purpose of purchasing

farms in Ontario, and running each of these farms on a business basis.

We (because I would like to be in the company) would have one general manager, with head office in Toronto, and an overseer on each farm. The company would furnish each farm with everything necessary, and the overseer would have to show a reasonable profit at the end of the year, or make room for some one that could. These overseers we would have to get from Great Britain; the Canadian farmer is too independent; he must run his own show.

We would need experienced farmers, married and having families. These would secure the help that they would need.

We would have each farm connected by telephone with the head office in Toronto.

We would have a power plant on each farm, either hydro, steam or gasoline. The two latter would require a dynamo. We would electrify our buildings throughout; touching a button would light up barn or stable, henhouse or hogpen. Electric power would pump water, pulp roots, thresh and chop grain, turn the fanning-mill and the grind-stone, separate the milk, churn the cream, run the sewing machine and rock the cradle.

We would have a large water-tank placed high. The farmer would only have to turn a tap and the water would rise in front of each animal, then turn another and it would disappear. Every labor-saving device would be installed; carriers would bring in the fodder and carriers would take out the manure.

But would all this pay?

Of course it would. Does not the farmer make it pay, notwithstanding his wrong methods and wasteful ways?

His apples are allowed to rot under the trees in the fall because he hasn't time to attend to them; he is too busy plowing. His fruit trees are not pruned in the spring; he is too busy seeding. His roots are caught by frost while in the ground or in temporary pits, because he could not get all the help he needed on certain weeks and no help at all other weeks (you cannot grow help over night). His new binder is rusting in an old, leaky shed, or perhaps is in the barn smothered in dust, where it probably serves as a hen-roost in winter. He cannot build an implement house because his money is in the bank. His hogpen is a quagmire; his henhouse is cold enough

in winter for a polar bear. His stables and byres have no ventilation; his mangers and feed-racks are so constructed that much of the feed finds its way to the floor and is tramped in the manure and lost.

These are a few of the most glaring leaks seen on many farms—not all by any means; many of our farmers are right up to the minute.

When we get our farms going we will have a gang of expert apple-packers who will go from farm to farm and pick, sort, and pack our apples properly.

Our central office will ship these in carloads direct and thus avoid the middleman.

We would also have a corps of expert fruit-tree men to visit each farm and keep our trees and plants in proper condition.

Our purchasing department would buy everything wholesale, in carload lots, and distribute to our different farms.

But I need not go further. It is evident to anyone the advantage of such a combination of farms.

Could we get the money? Of course we could. What safer investment than in Ontario improved lands? Even bankers would lend us money on that proposition.

I laid this proposition before one of Toronto's shrewdest men, whose business it is to "handle propositions."

His first comment was, "Why not get the Government to give a bonus?" This at first seemed to me ridiculous—that a Government should give farmers anything except ante-election promises.

But on second thought, I began to ask, why not bonus the farmer? He is bonused in Germany; has been for years. That is why the Germans are holding out; they have the grain stored. In France, I am informed, the same thing has been done.

The two greatest sources of wealth (there are many others) in this country are agriculture and manufacturing. The farmer, by his labor, causes the earth to bring forth food and raiment for mankind; the manufacturer by his labor causes raw material to become a finished product for the use of mankind.

Of these two, the farmer is by far the more important to the community at large. He is the commissariat department;

he feeds us. True, we get fish from the sea, but "no man may live by fish alone."

During the first six months of every year we in the east keep our ear to the ground, listening for the first reports on the crop prospects in the west. If these are favorable, then hurrah! The banks loosen up, the manufacturer's machinery hums, the railroads and steamships—those arteries of commerce—begin to throb at 100 per minute. Why? Because we all know that if the farmer has a bumper crop, he can afford to buy everything that the manufacturer has to sell. Manufactured stuff is worse than useless if you can't sell it.

We bonus every manufacturer in Canada with a 30% duty. We bonus some industries—the iron for instance—direct; we permit municipalities to bonus factories by bonds and tax exemptions; and these favors are given in proportion to the number of hands to be employed.

The climate of our most productive grain-growing belts in the west is too severe to permit of fattening stock profitably in winter. Why should not our old eastern farmers grab this western grain, convert it into beef, pork, mutton, wool, butter, cheese, chickens, eggs, etc., and then forward these for foreign markets? This would give employment to a large number of hands during the winter season, when work is most needed.

Why not bonus the farmer according to the number of hands he employs? The farmer who converts grain into beef and butter is just as much of a manufacturer as the man who converts wool into cloth; if you bonus the one why not the other?

The Government, in a faint, far-off, indirect way, attempts a bonus by giving prizes at our exhibitions and fairs. But even the prize-winners don't get enough to pay expenses; so that it is no bonus. Any benefit the farmer receives is indirect.

Why should not the Government give bonuses for the best farms?

Let a competent commission be appointed and let them visit every farm in a county, or township, and give points for conditions on each farm—good buildings, good fences, cleanness of fields, water system, machinery, pure-bred stock, number of help employed, total products per acre, net profits, and fifty other conditions that might be mentioned.

Then distribute good substantial cash bonuses, but stipulate that bonus-money must be spent on farm improvements.

Inside our city to-day there are thousands of men crying

out for work; just outside our city there are thousands of farms crying out for laborers. Why can we not bring those two things together?

In the first place, there is no place in the country for a laboring man to reside, except in the farmer's attic, which is often worse than a ten-cent lodging-house. If ten men got a job on a farm ten miles out of Toronto to-morrow, they would have to come to town to sleep.

In the second place, most people prefer to live in a city. Why? The answer is simple; people **live** in a city, they **exist** in the country. In a city we have rapid, pleasant transportation through clean, well-lighted streets; we can get anything at any time, if we have the price; we can get the news of the world every few hours; we see the streams of traffic; we hear the hum of machinery; we are at the heart of civilization and can feel its pulse beat; we have all kinds and sorts of amusements—nickel shows, theatres, automobiles, parties, horse shows, horse races—and above all, there are outdoor games and sports, lacrosse, baseball, boating, yachting, cycling, motor-ing, and scores of others.

And then we have mind rubbing up against mind, keeping us keen, bright, on edge, as it were, all the time.

In the country everything is about the opposite of what it is in the city—slow, lonesome, quiet, no amusements, no outdoor games, just work, eat, sleep, in monotonous rotation.

This is all wrong; we should have no city life as distinct from country life; in fact, we should have no cities, no towns, no villages. The tendency is in that direction now. Why should we huddle together so, piling ourselves on top of one another, in heaps twenty and thirty layers high?

We got into the habit of building cities when transportation and communication were slow. Now rapid transit has almost annihilated space, and rapid communication has done so completely; we can circle the world with a message in a few hours.

If the highways and byways of the County of York were as well paved and lighted as the streets and lanes of Toronto, there would be no Toronto in so far as residences are concerned.

Cities will die from the centre outward. To-day land is worth more five miles from the corner of King and Yonge than it is one mile away. In A.D. 2015 it will be difficult to tell just where urban life ends and rural life begins. The

material in the last fifteen or twenty storeys of our sky-scrapers will yet be used to pave what is now country roads. The farmer will then be as much a manufacturer as the machinist, or the textile worker; only he will create a different product.

Everybody will tell you that the trouble in this country is that too many people crowd into the cities. The rural population is decreasing, the urban population increasing. Even immigrants remain in the cities and often become a burden on charitable institutions.

This is not the immigrant's fault. We'll suppose a man, his wife and five children arrive in Toronto; he has only a few dollars left. There are two things that man must have at once; the first is housing, the second is work.

Imagine this man and his wife and little toddlers getting off at a rural railroad station and going to a farmer for housing and work. "No, I have no place for your family, but if you, yourself, will come back when harvest begins I'll give you a job." What is left for the poor man to do? Get back to town quick.

And as he sits in the big coach and looks out of the window at the big fields and big farms, and fumbles his few remaining British shillings in his breeches pockets, he thinks of the glorious word-pictures painted by our Canadian agents and by our Canadian literature, scattered broadcast throughout the British Isles.

At length he reaches the city again, and huddles in two attic bedrooms and gets a job chucking muck in a sewer with foreigners that jabber in unknown tongues. He writes home on Sunday.

We must have housing in rural districts.

The Ontario Government should furnish free of cost to every farmer a blue print of a residence suitable for a hired man and his family. Then let the Government give a bonus to every farmer erecting such residence, with a plot, say a quarter-acre or more, suitable for a garden, adjoining thereto.

A hired man's thrifty wife and little ones could raise half their support from the garden. If the hired man were out of work for a few weeks, or even months, at any time, he would not have starvation staring him in the face, as is the case in the city. He would always have something in store for a rainy day. If one farmer could not give him work, another could. His children would enjoy the blessing of being brought up on

a farm; they would be healthy, robust, happy; they would form a taste for farming and farm life; when big enough to work they would have their trade learned, so to speak; they would fit in where they belonged; they would be of some use to the farmer.

As it is at present, a farmer does without help till the pinch comes. Then he goes to town and gets ready-made help; but it is like ready-made clothing; it does not fit, gives poor service, and is dear at any price.

While the Minister of Agriculture is in the blue-print business, he should get out blue-prints for all out-houses on a farm, from the barn down to the hen-coop. On most farms there is a heavy loss in fodder, and health of animals, through faulty construction of outbuildings.

Let every farmer who has a river running through his farm, or a lake on it, build a number of summer cottages. These could easily be filled during summer months with tenants from the city, if the transportation were good.

There is many a man in a city who cannot afford to send his wife and little ones to a summer resort (where babies are not wanted), who would be delighted to send them to a rustic cottage where he could spend the week-end with them, and return to duty Monday morning.

Cottagers would, of course, buy their supplies direct from the farmer; and not only that, but they would form business connections with the farmer that would last all the year round. He would continue to supply them with butter, eggs, poultry, vegetables, fruits, meats, etc. This would lower the price of these things to the consumer and raise the price to the producers, because it would cut out transportation and the middle-man.

This arrangement would do three things—it would reduce the cost of living, make city-bred children strong and healthy, and give city folk a taste for country life.

I think it is self-evident to every one that the first step in the movement to get "back to the land" is proper housing on the land.

Ever since monotheistic religion was brought into vogue by the Arabs of Asia Minor, mankind has been told that the good people, the real good, a small percentage apparently, will be rewarded with great happiness after death.

This is all right in so far as it goes, but the great bulk of

mankind have always tried to get a little taste of happiness before death, and it is one of the wisest bents of human nature. Amusement, worldly pleasure, is as essential to the progress of civilization as is philosophy or science.

People must and will be amused; they will not stay where there is no pleasure, especially the young. There is practically no amusement in the country, consequently every youth with snap, brains and go in him leaves the humdrum, dead monotony of rustic existence and hies himself to the whirl of city life.

When our big syndicate gets up-to-date farms established all over the country, five or six miles apart, we'll have a campus, or field of amusements, on each farm. It will need to be a level field, adjacent to the roadway. I know that the idea of "wasting" a good field in that manner will break the heart of many an old farmer; but the poor old chaps have to die some time.

All labor will cease at five or six o'clock on our farms the same as in the city, and Saturday afternoons will be a half-holiday.

Each athletic field will have an assembly hall and bleacheries and a cinder path. In summer the old men will pitch quoits and bowl on the green; the young men will play lacrosse, baseball and football; the young women will play basketball and lawn tennis (when they are not watching the young men). When it rains everybody will retire to the hall and have a dance.

In winter the field will be flooded, and the old men will play at the "roarin' game," the young men and young women will play hockey and skate, and have masquerades and a band.

In the assembly hall there will be lectures, concerts, dramatic performances, lantern views, and above all the "weekly hop," after prayer-meeting, with the preacher and the elders and their spouses leading off. Why not? Surely God loves to see people happy here below, and if so, why should not His servants try to carry out His wishes?

Alas! by this time all the elderly fathers of families would be gone, "Each in his narrow cell forever laid." That last stroke would be the last straw that broke their hearts. But my observation of elderly mothers of families is that they have more patience and sympathy with the frivolities of the rising generation.

Having established sufficient housing for help on the farm

and amusement for everybody, it remains to secure rapid transportation—steam, electric and macadam roadways. It is a waste of money to build roadways and make no provision for their upkeep.

Aeroplanes are not in use yet, but will be after the war is over.

We are sending to the front the best men of our young Dominion to fight for the weak and uphold the cause of civilization. We must do more than that; we must supply the sons of Britain and their allies with foodstuffs while this, the bloodiest of wars, continues to last. We are the member of the British family nearest to the heart of the Empire, geographically. British ships give us safe transportation; it is up to us to produce the goods.

Every farm in Ontario should be run on the mixed farming basis, and every farm should be made to produce to its full capacity, instead of only 50% as at present.

Every farm should have on it every animal that it pays to raise on a farm; this is the most economic way; the cow picks up the waste fodder from the horse; the hog will pick up the grain dropped in garnering the harvest; the sheep will grow fat even in a summer fallow; poultry pick up grubs, bugs and worms that would otherwise injure crops.

The by-products of the dairy help to feed calves and hogs; and, best of all, the by-products of all our animals go to enrich the fields.

The more animals we have the more fertilizer we produce; the more fertilizer, the more crops; the more crops we reap, the more animals we can feed. Hence it follows that the more we can make our farms produce, the better farming pays; and the better farming pays the more people will go farming; and the more people go farming the better for everybody.

Intensive farming will not only drive away hard times, but it will prevent hard times from even returning.

It therefore behooves us to wake up the farmer and shake up farming; get a move on. The best insurance against a "bad year" is a big manure pile in the spring.

I see our Governments are beginning to sit up and take notice. They have called conferences of farmers. Talk—wind—is a poor thing to farm with. Show the farmer a concrete example in his own neighborhood of a farm run at its full capacity, and netting its owner from two thousand to

three thousand dollars of net profit each year; then he will begin to look into how you did it and will copy your example.

No man has a stronger conviction that he is doing things right than has the farmer. Practically none of our farmers have any knowledge of scientific farming; they each do it the way daddy did it, only easier.

Now, suppose wheat to be worth \$1.50 next year; it may be more; the average farmer will reason thus: "I can make as much money off 10 acres this year as off 20 acres last year, therefore I'll only put in 10 acres. I can manage that without help and have no bother." He hates the thought of having to think.

This is wrong; it is unpatriotic; but I am afraid it is true.

When prices are low the farmer must produce more or suffer in consequence.

I see that the Governments are going to supply the Farmers' Conferences with lecturers. If a man were going to lecture on, say bricks, he would have samples which he could pass round among the audience.

A lecturer could not pass farms round among his audience, but he could pass his audience round among the different things on a farm.

A man lecturing on farming should be able to take his audience from field to field, from horse stable to cattle byre, from silo to manure pile, from granary to root house, from hog-pen to hen-coop, and explain as he went why things are thus and so. One hour spent in this manner would be worth more than a week's windy talk in a town hall. Give the farmers a concrete example; show them the real thing.

Why should not the Government place a real, self-sustaining, profit-paying, demonstration farm, such as I have described, in every county, or constituency, or municipality?

These farms, if properly run, would be a centre of distribution for clean seed, and thoroughbred stock, and pure-bred poultry; they would be a source of revenue to the Government; they would be a blessing to the farmer and the citizen alike; they would make farming a profession, and the noblest of all professions. There is no man requires such a broad education, such a vast amount of scientific knowledge, as a farmer.

It is a disgrace to Canadian intelligence and Canadian ingenuity that tens of thousands of human beings are to-day suffering, in our midst, from lack of sufficient food and cloth-

ing, and crying out for employment; while tens of thousands of the most fertile farms the heaven's sun ever shone upon, are only half-cultivated, or not cultivated at all. Cities are taxing themselves to death to furnish work for the workless; cities are calling out to the Governments to push on public works of all kinds so as to tide over the crisis.

The city of Toronto to-day is being asked to raise \$1,000,000 for the unemployed. A million dollars would buy 1,000 farms in the county of York, and these would give employment to and yield food for all the unemployed in Toronto for ages to come.

Money spent in cities and on public works generally are necessary and of benefit to everybody indirectly, but such works do not make bread and butter any more plentiful or any cheaper. Money spent on the farm benefits everybody directly; it gives us what we need—work for the workless and food for the hungry.

Governments exist for the benefit of the people; they are always trying to do what is in the public interest; they spend money freely on means of transportation—railroads, canals, harbors, lighthouses; they spend money freely on the education of teachers, preachers, lawyers, doctors—non-producers; why not spend it as freely or more freely on the education of producers, viz.,—mechanics, artisans, and above all farmers? I have heard it whispered that our Federal Government is going to make a grant of \$3,000,000 annually for ten years for technical education. This is as it should be. But if three millions is to be spent each year on teaching youth how to make things, then ten millions should be spent each year on teaching youth how to grow things.

Goldsmith's village preacher not only pointed to better worlds, but he led the way. Our Governments should not only point the way to farmers through lectures, but should lead the way through demonstration farms.

The crying need of Canada to-day, of every country to-day, is farm produce—grain, animals, and all that these mean to the community. We can have, often do have, overproduction from the factory; we never have, cannot have, overproduction from the farm.

JOHN NOBLE,

January 20th, 1915.

219 Carlton St., Toronto.

